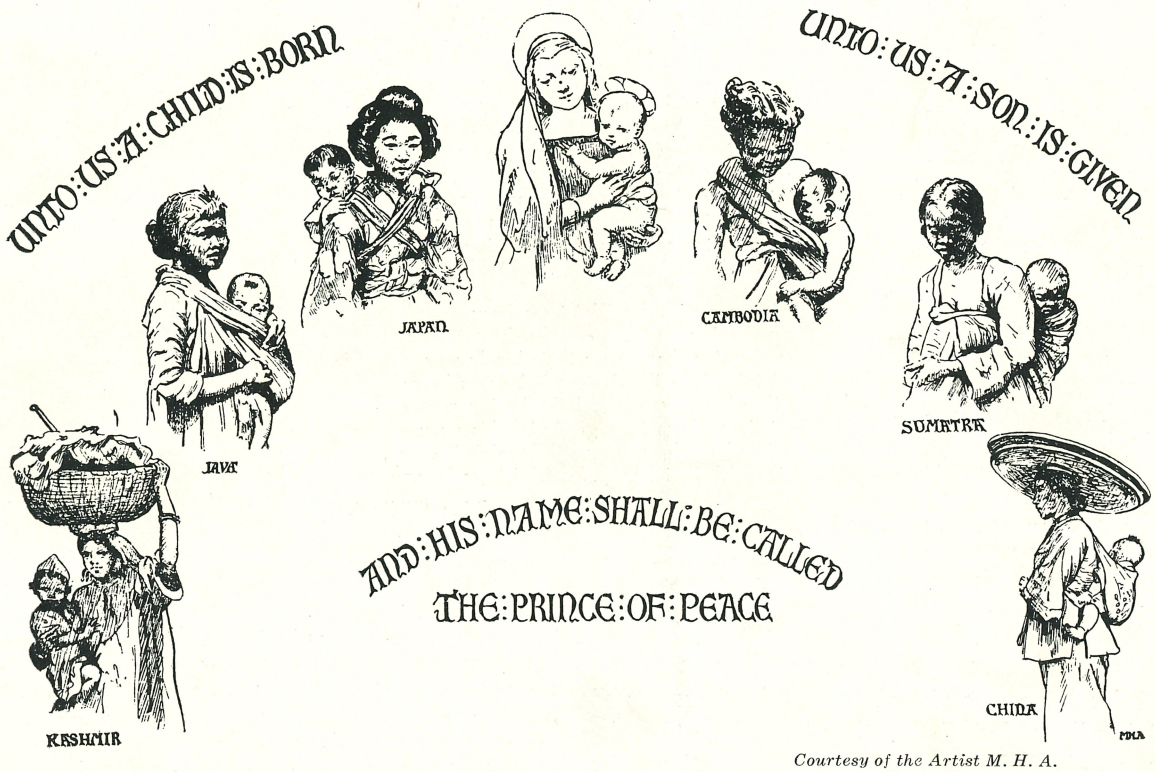
« « The » »

MEDICAL MISSIONARY



Courtesy of the Artist M. H. A.

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The MEDICAL MISSIONARY

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EDITORIAL

THIS year, for the first time in its existence, our Society in Washington will pass Christmas without our beloved Superior, Dr. Dengel. Our friends who associate the Christmas holidays with a visit to the Medical Mission House Crib and Dr. Dengel's warm welcome, will appreciate our loss. She will, no doubt, be giving her same friendly smiles and heartfelt cordiality to our Hindu and Mohammedan neighbors in far off Rawalpindi.

Although we are quite incapable of filling the gap, we wish in her name to express our deep gratitude to the Washington Auxiliary, the Mackin Club, the Harrisburg Little Flower Circle, the Lots for Little Thrift Shop, our Contributors, Benefactors, and Subscribers, for all that they have done to make it possible for the Society to continue its work during the past year. We thank you from our hearts and we pray that at this Christmastide you may be showered with an abundance of blessings both spiritual and temporal.

The purchase and establishment, this year, of a House in London has marked for us a decisive step forward. This house will be used for a house of study and a postulate. It forms a new nucleus from which information concerning our work may be spread, and to which our British and European postulants may come.

By it we shall be brought into closer touch with our European friends, thereby making the need for medical mission work more keenly appreciated. As from their ranks we have already recruited some of our members, we have good reason to believe that with a stepping stone on the other side of the Atlantic, this number will be greatly increased. In this way we shall be better able to fulfill the wonderful Catholic ideal of universality with regard to both our missionaries and our mission.

A CHRISTMAS WISH

I send you a wish for Christmas Day
And for every hour of a glad New Year;
May the light of Love, with its deathless ray,
Wherever you walk be shining near;
May the light of faith in your mind and heart
Be brightly burning in weal and woe,
May the light of Hope from you ne'er depart
Till it leads you Home with its guiding glow.

I send you a wish for Christmas Day
And for every moment of all the years:
May the Grace of God, though your soul may stray,
Be always with you to calm your fears,
To guide you along the path once more
That ends in Heaven, where Jesus waits
To welcome the soldier when strife is o'er
And lead him in through the Golden Gates.

I send you a wish for Christmas Day;
May the joy that the shepherds felt that morn
When the star shone over their lonely way
And told them the Saviour Babe was born:
May that joy be yours and the lasting peace
That lives where love of God holds sway,
May they both be yours until Time shall cease,
Is the wish that I send for Christmas Day.

—Brian O'Higgins.

THE SOCIETY OF CATHOLIC MEDICAL MISSIONARIES

THE Society of Catholic Medical Missionaries was founded in September, 1925, in Washington, D. C., with the approval of His Grace, Most Rev. M. J. Curley, D.D., Archbishop of Baltimore. The Society is designed to meet the need existing in all parts of the foreign mission field for Catholic medical women, willing to devote their lives and profession to the service of the suffering millions in non-Christian countries.

It is intended for qualified women: doctors, dentists, nurses, pharmacists, dietitians and technicians, etc., who feel attracted to the religious life, and who wish to continue to practice their profession in the service of God as foreign missionaries. These will find ample scope for their generosity in the Society of Catholic Medical Missionaries, whose purpose is to render medical aid, no disease or condition being excepted, to Christians and non-Christians, and to bring the light and consolation of our Holy Faith to the people under their care.

The Society will also accept members who possess no medical qualifications, either with a view of training them in some branch of the profession after admission, or with a view to devoting themselves to non-medical work inevitably connected with the undertakings of the Society at home and abroad.

The requirements for admission are the same as for other religious communities.

The field of labor of the Society is not restricted to any one particular mission country. The Society conducts now two hospitals and training schools for Indian nurses; namely the Holy Family Hospital, Rawalpindi, Punjab, and the Mitford Hospital, Dacca, Bengal; the Society also conducts two public health centers in Dacca.

Please address inquiries to Dr. Anna Dengel, Catholic Medical Mission House, Brookland, Washington, D. C., U. S. A.

BETHLEHEM

By E. KANE, M.D.

BETHLEHEM is so high on the crest of a mountain range that the raw air at Christmas time chills one to the bone. Once in every seven years it snows. Five miles away, toward the north, across gently rolling plains and a shallow valley rises the Mount of Olives with Jerusalem at the summit of the mount. Bethlehem, like all Oriental cities, is composed of two or three storied stone houses packed tightly together. The ground floors of these houses open onto the street. They have either a heavy wooden door and a barred window or the whole front will be opened to form a store inside of which will sit a carpenter, a maker of sheepskin coats, a curio seller, a shoemaker, a fruit and vegetable merchant, a coppersmith, or a vendor of cheap jewelry. The second floors of these houses have either an overhanging balcony or a false wooden front, and, from the windows of these floors or from the balconies, rugs are hung out to air and clothes to dry. The third floors occasionally jut out over the second. Upper story windows are seldom barred. The roofs are flat or very gently sloping. The narrow street below, naturally, is dark. The better homes resemble our apartment houses, large stores, and prisons. Many people can crowd into such homes as these, and many do! There is little or no vegetation in the city proper. The cobblestone streets are narrow and dark, crowded with people, sheep, and donkeys. The markets are full of flies, wasps, fruit, pastry, meat, and hurrying pedestrians. Donkeys, their panniers full of bread or hides, jostle one forward over the rough, unevenly paved roads. On wider avenues (I remember but one that, really, is wide) automobiles whiz by while camels and donkeys trot along at the command of their masters. Men and women often ride astride donkeys so tiny that the feet of the riders nearly touch the ground, yet the poor little animals seem always ready to bear any burden cheerfully, to trot ahead gaily and rapidly, or to jog along tirelessly as the occasion demands—kindly, patient, docile beasts!

Bethlehem — In a Bethlehem Street

At the edge of the city, on the slope facing Jerusalem, stands the Church of the Nativity. Steps lead from the floor of this church downwards about nine feet to where the cave and manger in which Christ was born are supposed to have been. The base of the manger is of stone; a few large bare bits of wooden timber remain to mark what once may have been the framework of Christ's crib. Some of the wood has been sent to Rome.

The cave in which the crib stands is about eight feet high, fifteen wide, and thirty long. Deep in the hillside, sheltered from the winds and warmed by the breath of cattle, it was doubtless a grateful shelter to a mother when, one bleak, raw, winter evening there being no room for her in the inn of the nearby city, she took shelter there for the night; that night when she gave to us the Saviour of the world. Possibly, the cave was more comfortable than the cold stone houses close at hand; probably, it was cleaner and freer of insects. Today, the room has a neatly-paved floor; rounded stone pillars support its roof; various colored lamps hang from the ceiling; the wall is hung with red and blue velvet and decorated with

(Continued on page 11)

SNAPSHOTS OF INDIA

By L. E. Reggio

EARLY on the first morning of our trip across country to Calcutta, in the most comfortable train of any of our voyages around the world, we got out at Nagpur. The toe of one of my shoes was gaping. A native "moochi," very conveniently squatting cross-legged just outside of the station, at once sewed up my rubber sole holding the shoe between his toes. He gave me a board on which to rest my foot. When I asked: "how much?" he grinned and jabbered what probably was: "whatever Memsahib likes to give." I handed him half a rupee (about 20 cents) whereupon he grinned more broadly than ever, took the coin and banged it on five or six of the tools spread around on the ground, and finally touched it to his heart and forehead, bowed and grinned some more. I supposed that the coin was satisfactorily resanctified after having been contaminated by a Christian; but it seems that when the first job of the day is a well-paid one, this little ceremony brings more luck.

AN ALTAR TO KRISHNA

A sacred, but rather nosy white cow came up to investigate the moochi's work and bumped me off my footrest into the dust. She was given a dig by a native bystander and shooed away. Cows are sacred—as are all animals in India—and may not be killed, but that does not prevent the poor creatures from being roughly treated.

Calcutta

The foreign quarter is very modern and has a quite lovely Church of the Sacred Heart. In contrast, the native city is one of unutterable filth and squalor.

The Kali Devi, or Durga Temple (the blood-thirsty Hindu goddess of sacrifice) is horrible, beyond words. Here, every day, the courtyard streams with the blood of 60, 80, or more, goats which are sacrificed to satisfy Kali, while mangy, half-starved dogs roam about licking up the blood and sneaking off with the little goat heads that lie on the ground waiting to be sold.

Rows of naked beggars and holy men in all stages of disease, blindness, maimedness, and general misery, squat on both sides of the street leading to the temple, and everywhere are cows, cows, cows, and more cows, with or without calves, wandering about the temple or lying in your path.

The temple stands hemmed in among wretched shacks and houses and beside it grows the sacred Cactus Maternity Tree which flowers but bears no fruit. Here the childless women come to tie offerings to its branches; mostly of little stones done up in dirty bits of rags. Then, when a child is born its head is shaved and the hair is brought as a thank offering and thrown inside the iron railing around the tree which is piled high with black fluff. Women sit in groups about the tree, nursing their babies. The noise of yelling pilgrims and beggars is deafening.

The superstition of these poor people is pitiful beyond words, and the only way by which they can be reached (where women alone can reach women), and the age-old prejudice overcome, is through our gentle and understanding missionaries.

Bombay

The first words we heard when we landed in Bombay and passed under the great arch of the Gateway of India, were "Any corns on your feet, Memsahib? Any corns on your feet, Sahib?" A tall stately Indian draped in white, and sporting a huge yellow turban, plied his trade on the street carrying his sharp little horn knives in his slender brown hands.

MY COBBLER AT NAGPUR

The first newspaper we picked up was the *Evening News of India* and this is what we found in it:

"Notice: My grateful thanks to the Sacred Hearts of Sri, Krishna, Buddha, and Jesus for great deliverance."

He was not taking any chances.

REV. FRANCIS GOODALL, C. S. C.

We are so glad to see Father Goodall in our midst again. He has just returned, after doing six years of splendid work in Bengal.

Seven years ago we learned to appreciate his endless patience, boundless energy and tireless zeal when, as chaplain, organist and teacher, he instructed and guided us along the paths of the religious life. Hardly had he stepped into the Bengalese, when he stooped and picked up the threads where he had left them and undertook to conduct a retreat for our candidates and novices in preparation for the 8th of November.

OFF FOR BENGAL

ON THURSDAY, November 3, the Foreign Mission Seminary of the Holy Cross held a departure ceremony for Rev. George Pellegrin, C.S.C.; Rev. James P. McGarvey, C.S.C.; Rev. Francis X. Quinn, C.S.C.; and Brother Neil, C.S.C. It was presided over by His Excellency, Rt. Rev. Timothy Crowley, C.S.C., Bishop of Dacca, Bengal, assisted by the Very Rev. George Marr, C.S.C., and Rev. Francis Goodall, C.S.C.

The many friends and relatives of the departing missionaries, and the friends of the Bengalese witnessed a very simple and beautiful ceremony, which was followed by the Solemn Benediction of the Most Blessed Sacrament.

The missionaries bade good bye to their Bishop with the Kiss of Peace, and in like manner to their religious superiors and fellow seminarians. Standing in a row on the lowest step of the altar, they inclined slightly forward with each "Pax tecum" and the responding "Et cum spiritu tuo." This was, perhaps, the last and very fitting picture which some of their comrades of many years' standing would have of them.

Father Goodall delivered the sermon, pointing out the joys and sorrows; the conquests and failures, in the path of the missionary.

Mr. C. A. Benson, the very able choir leader, distinguished himself by his interpretation of the Latin hymn, "Homo Quidam." A master of Gregorian Chant, he has so trained his choir that they are able to render the most delicate shades and nuances of tone, thus bringing out the meaning and beauty of the liturgy. Certainly the Bengalese Choir need fear few competitors.

THE CHRISTMAS LITURGY

THE KEEPING of Christmas on December 25 seems to have originated at Rome. The oldest documentary evidence is that of the Philocalian Kalendar (336 or 354), where it is certainly not mentioned as an innovation. Elsewhere and previously it was kept on January 6, as it is still by the Armenian Menophysites. St. John Chrysostom, in 386, brought the practice of Antioch into line with Rome. From thence it spread to Constantinople, to Jerusalem (after 411) and to Alexandria in 430.

The choice of date may have been determined by a desire to oppose the Mithraic "Birthday of the Sun," which fell on this day. St. Cyprian writes: "O how wonderfully Providence acted that on that day on which the sun was born . . . Christ should be born." And St. Gregory reproves those Christians who on this day turned on the very threshold of St. Peter's to salute the rising sun.

Originally the feast was celebrated with the usual two Masses, one of the Vigil after the night office, and one on the Feast itself. In the fifth century a third was inserted between, in honor of St. Anastasia, whose relics were at that time brought to Rome. A Mass of the day before had already been added which is not that of the Vigil, strictly speaking. From the time of Sixtus III, who built the Chapel of the Crib in St. Mary Major's, the Vigil Mass was celebrated there, and there is evidence to show that it was not a great public function. The Solemn Mass of the Feast, at which the people communicated, was the third, celebrated at St. Peter's until 1143, and after that at St. Mary Major's.

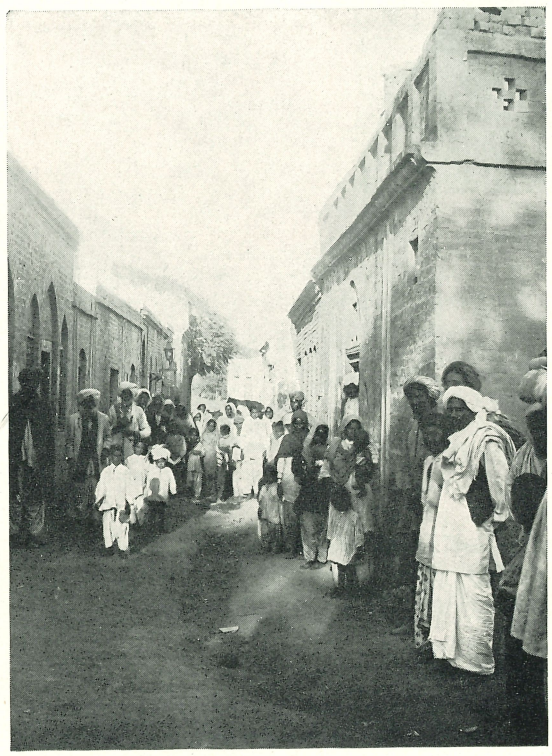
The triple offering was a Papal privilege. The three Masses were not peculiar to Christmas; the Feast of the Apostles Peter and Paul had three, and that of the sons of St. Felicitas four. The number was fixed by the number of sanctuaries specially connected with the feast. And then it was only the Pope who had the privilege of celebrating more than once.—*The Universe.*

ALL IN A DAY'S WORK

By SISTER M. LAETITIA

IT WAS 3.30 on a hot summer afternoon. The sun beat down in an almost blinding glare. Nothing was moving but a half-starved mangy dog hunting for scraps of food in a heap of refuse on the street; no one in sight but a few slightly clad brown bodies stretched out, sound asleep, in the coolest spot obtainable—the perspiration glistening on their backs even in repose. Apparently somebody was stirring, for a man, clad in picturesque Bengali kamij and dhoti, appeared walking rapidly in spite of the heat. A call for an Indian nurse. I felt sorry for her; nevertheless, sent her off, and within a few minutes started out on my rounds, baby scales in hand, to visit the patients. My, but it was hot; and the prickly heat, how it prickled!

Everything was still; so still and quiet that it seemed strange; for even at this time of the day there is usually some sign of life. Nothing but a faint sound of a baby crying or the angry barking of a dog disturbed from its siesta broke the silence. The first house that I went to I called: "Bibi bibi!" All in vain; the door was closed and barred, and closed and barred it remained.



"IT WAS JUST ABOUT WIDE ENOUGH FOR THE BABY AUSTIN"

The next visit was to a soap-maker's home. "Go home; go home, Shister!" said Mr. Soap-maker.

"Why, what is the matter?" I inquired.

"You'll see! You'll see!" he replied (and nothing more could be gotten out of him).

Such people! I thought to myself. There is something in the wind this afternoon, but this man doesn't want to tell me, and if I stay here all day I sha'n't find it out. However, I weighed the baby and left.

The next house belonged to a poor coolie, very simple people and at that time very frightened—they had reason to be. Somebody had been slain and was about to be carried by the supporters of one faction in procession through the streets; while those on the opposite side were all prepared for trouble, which our coolie friend thought would lead to a riot. When I heard this, I felt that discretion was the better part of valor, and I made a hasty retreat to the Shishur Mangalalai, as our welfare center is called.

The Indian nurse, whom I had sent out a little earlier, had heard the same thing and, like myself, had quickly returned to the center. I hesitated, wondering whether to go to her patient or to find out what was happening to Sister Helen at the other center—she not being as fortunate as myself in having a car to carry her quickly out of harm's way. Sister Helen won, and I, thinking that I would return to the poor patient as soon as possible, started out for Narindia, at the other end of the town, where the second center is situated. All was quiet until I got almost to the main street, and there I found that I had run into an ocean of trouble. I got through, however, to the center, but our difficulties were not yet ended. What to do about the patient? Sister and I decided to go together to the patient's house and see what was happening. By skirting the town, we reached our destination without any difficulty. The house was very large, but located in the tiniest guli (lane) in the world. It was just about wide enough for the Baby Austin with three inches to spare on either side.

We were ushered into the labor room, which was quite bare. A deck chair, no less, was produced for our comfort (the people were quite well off) and we took turns in sitting in it and on the floor. A few minutes before delivery we had to put it out of the room, otherwise it would have had to have been destroyed as unclean—in accordance with Hindu belief. We tried to get a wooden bed for the patient—just boards nailed to a frame—but this luxury was denied her. Indeed, we were lucky to be inside the house at all and not out in the courtyard, where they wanted to put us. For the sake of the woman, we had strenuously objected to that proposition for it looked as though it might rain, and when it rains in Dacca, it is a very thorough business.

Our light consisted of a tiny earthenware

saucer of mustard oil, a piece of rag being placed in it to form a wick. Needless to say, it was very inadequate as a light, but it tried to make up for that little defect by giving forth a strong mustard odor. It also had a very bad habit of going out every few minutes, and when the light went out we had to work in pitch darkness.

We couldn't get a thing that we wanted for the mother and baby. Clean rags were a necessity, but only after much persuasion would the husband bring us a few, or rather throw them at us. The Hindus may not hand even the end of anything to anyone contaminated by the labor room. Therefore, they either place it on the floor and one must pick it up, or else one holds out one's hands and it is dropped into them.

The next difficulty was water. After some time, an old earthenware vessel of no value, which could be thrown away afterwards, was produced. The servant carried water from the well in a bright, shiny lota, and we had to carry our harria outside of the room while she poured the water into it, from a height of about two feet, without touching either us or our vessel. Presently the patient wanted water. She, being a Hindu, we did not offer her any, but called to the servant (also a caste Hindu), from whose hand she could drink. The servant would not come into the room. What could we do? The poor woman was crying for water and there was no one to give it to her. At last Sister Helen picked up the cup and handed it to her. Rather to our surprise, she drank the water, but apparently had not noticed who had given it, for suddenly she pushed Sister Helen away for all she was worth. Poor Sister Helen collapsed into a heap on the floor—a picture of utter surprise and dismay — and the patient screamed at the top of her voice: "Maila! Maila! Maila!" It was a most ear-piercing shriek. For a moment we thought that she had gone mad, but soon discovered that she was yelling: "Dirty! Dirty! Dirty!" all because Sister had given her a drink and the Hindus do not take water from any but Hindu hands.

At last, our work being finished a little before midnight, we very thankfully hurried home to say our night prayers and to get a bite to eat before the clock struck twelve.

The next day we went to visit the mother and baby and found that there was trouble in the street outside. At their request, we moved all the people in the house, 18 in all, to another place. The day after that, our patient undertook the journey to Mymensingh, a distance of about 75 miles from Dacca.

Sad to relate, we met her husband on the street some weeks later, and he told us that his wife had died of typhoid fever about six weeks after the baby was born. He looked at us very reproachfully, blaming our care as the cause of typhoid. No matter if the patient had died 50 years later from any disease whatever, her death would still have been attributed to our work. However, we told him that it was the will of God; so with the resignation of the East, he nodded his head sadly and went his way. His wife was a very beautiful, gentle, young girl, and he, poor man, had been very fond of her.

You see all the superstition that we have to cope with. It only can be removed by striving constantly to educate the people, and what can two Sisters do in a place the size of Dacca? If there were more of us, what a tremendous difference it would make!

REV. MICHAEL A. MATHIS, C. S. C., AND BROTHER NORBERT, C. S. C., WITH DR. DENGEL AND THE MEMBERS OF THE GENERAL CHAPTER IN THE PIAZZA OF ST. PETER'S ITSELF

Father Mathis with his usual foresight and kindness had arranged to be in Rome to open the Chapter. This was held through the courtesy of the Religious of the Sacred Heart at their historic house, Trinita dei Monti. Here the members stayed and were made recipients of the most generous hospitality.

The very beautiful General Intention of the Apostleship of Prayer for December is "Heavenly Desires."

THE SOCIETY AT HOME AND ABROAD

WASHINGTON

ON THE 8th of NOVEMBER, the octave of All Saints' Day, after a Retreat conducted by Rev. Francis Goodall, C.S.C., Sister M. Gabriel and Sister M. Paul were admitted into the Society as Members and received the Mission Cross. At the same time, Miss Lieselotte Neuhaus, Miss Elizabeth Podolsky, Miss Agnes Heyer, and Miss Yvonne t'Sas were invested with the garb of the Society and received the names: Sister M. Monica, Sister M. Joseph, Sister M. Judith, and Sister M. Miriam.

His Excellency, Rt. Rev. Timothy Crowley, C.S.C., Bishop of Dacca, Bengal, presided at the ceremony and was assisted by Rev. Michael A. Mathis, C.S.C., and Brother Bertrand, C.S.C.

The choir opened the ceremony by singing the "Veni Creator Spiritus," after which Father Mathis introduced His Excellency in the following words: "I congratulate the Society on this unique occasion when for the first time you have a Bishop from the mission field to preside at this ceremony. Surely no one else could more fittingly encourage us."

When His Excellency had finished his apt and beautiful sermon, the candidates received the garb. Then Sister M. Gabriel and Sister M. Paul, each with a lighted candle in hand—symbolical of Christ's command: "Let your light shine before men"—made the Solemn Promises. The ceremony was closed by Benediction of the Most Blessed Sacrament.

SR. M. PAUL AND SR. M. GABRIEL WITH THE FOUR NEW NOVICES

His Excellency said in part: "My dear Sisters, certainly this is a very happy occasion, and I appreciate the opportunity of assisting at this ceremony. There is little left for me to say but to congratulate you on the wonderful future which Our Blessed Lord holds in store for you. It is your high privilege to cooperate in that special work of Our Dear Lord—the healing of the sick. Having myself spent 25 years in Bengal, I can appreciate the work in which your Sisters there are engaged.

"The time you are now about to enter upon will be spent in preparing you for this great future. Pray, and pray well. Pray for the success of the Sisters who are already engaged in this work. Pray that they may keep in good health—without health you can not do very much. Look on this time as a great opportunity to fit yourselves properly for the work you are going to do. You need every moment of it. St. Francis Xavier wrote from India to the seminarians in Salamanca: 'Unless you are really good Jesuits in Salamanca, you won't be good missionaries'; and I would say the same to you.

"Temptations will come to you frequently—the devil himself will come under many forms—but surely this is God's work, and you mustn't give it up on account of these temptations. It is not an easy work. Our Lord did not invite us to an easy task, but He said: 'Take up your cross and follow Me.' The very thought of your vocation will sweeten these difficulties, but unless you remain united to Our Lord and extract from your spiritual exercises all the light and strength you can, it will be impossible for us to carry it on both here and there. We must strive to know what His Holy Will is and when we know what it is, to follow it."

The next day the Medical Mission House witnessed another touching and impressive service—the departure ceremony for Sister M. Paul. Where the sisters' tears had not begun to flow, the elements more than made up their lack. It poured all day long, the storm increasing towards evening. At 5 o'clock the lights went out, so the farewell banquet had to be eaten by candlelight. Two cars were stuck on the road and many expected guests were unable to come. However, a few of our very good friends were not to be daunted by the weather and arrived at 8 o'clock to witness the ceremony by the soft flickering glow of the candlelight.

The Rev. Michael A. Mathis, C.S.C., officiated, assisted by the Rev. William C. Havey, C.S.C., and Brother Bertrand, C.S.C. Among those present were the Very Rev. George Marr, C.S.C., and the Very Rev. Francis McBride, C.S.C.

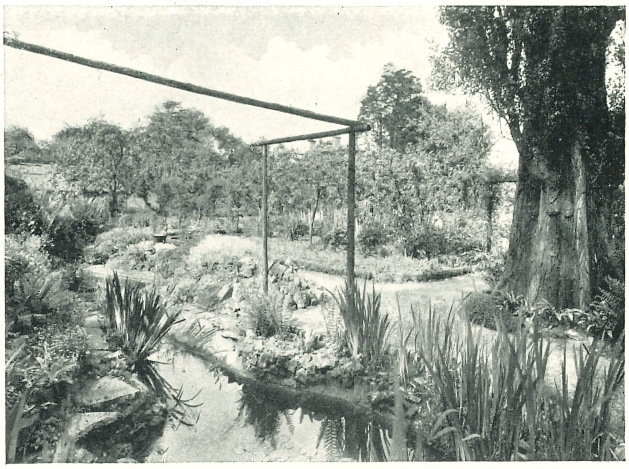
Father Mathis, taking for his text the words of Our Lord, "Go ye into the whole world and preach the gospel to every creature," Mark 16:15, preached a most eloquent and fitting sermon.

Promote Medical Missions by subscribing to "The Medical Missionary." Subscription, $1 a year. Address, "The Medical Missionary," Brookland, Washington, D. C.

LONDON

Sister Dorothy writes:

"On the Feast of the Holy Rosary and the First Friday of October, Our Lord came to stay with us at last. In the afternoon we had our first Benediction of the Most Blessed Sacrament, and Father Blatts consecrated our house and community to the Sacred Heart. Then the whole house was blessed.



MATER CHRISTI MEDICAL MISSION HOUSE GARDEN

"We kept that day as a holiday, of course.

"Yesterday afternoon His Eminence, Francis, Cardinal Bourne, honored us with a visit. His Eminence said that Msgr. Carton de Wiart had been speaking to him about us and that the other day he had received our magazine and saw the picture of the house, so he had come to see it for himself. We showed His Eminence all over the house and walked in the garden. He seemed very much interested in everything.

"His Eminence spoke very highly of Dr. Agnes McLaren, whom he had known well. He remarked that she had never lost her Scotch accent. (Sister Dorothy is Scotch.—*Ed.*)

"Wishing us every success, and telling us that the great thing to aim at was holiness, His Eminence gave us his blessing. Before leaving, he sent a message to Dr. Dengel that he would be very much interested and pleased to see her on her return from India in the spring.

"This was, indeed, a red-letter day for us."

RAWALPINDI

Sister Margaret Mary writes:

"We have been celebrating too many holidays lately. On September 30, the birthday of our Society, we had a picnic for ourselves. On October 2, Dora (one of our Indian nurses) finished her three-year course, so the nurses and our boarder baby had a picnic.

"Last Friday we were given a little show all for ourselves. Did you ever see an Indian fish with a small net? In case you didn't, I shall try to tell you about it. We were at the Lehi Bridge, on the Jhelum Road. The water was quite shallow—knee-deep in most places, except where there were little falls. Three people approached us—a lad with a bundle on his head, dressed in a man's shirt 10 sizes too large; a boy of about 16 years in a loin cloth, carrying what looked like a tidy bundle of cords (this was the fish net); and a middle-aged man, possibly a Sikh, carrying his hand scales and a wide-open basket, all on his head. They stopped a short distance from us. The boy with the net picked up a stone the size of his fist and threw it into the water, then he walked cautiously upstream until he was out in the middle. With one fling of his right arm, he opened the net and let it sink, which it did, quietly and rapidly into the stream. Apparently timing his motions, after about 10 seconds he stooped and, one by one, he threw five shining fishes—6 to 12 inches long—to the lad on the bank. The whole thing took about five minutes. Then, drawing up his net, he proceeded upstream about 30 feet and repeated the performance. The second time he caught about 15 fishes. The lad beamed with delight at every fish thrown to him, and the old man sitting on the bank seemed quite pleased. We asked to see the fish. They looked a bit like the nice perch from Lake Michigan. The net is all hand-made and weighted with beads of lead.

"An hour later, we strolled upstream to see the falls, and there we found the same three sitting around a nice campfire—the fish all cleaned—about to have some chapaties. Really, Sister, these little adventures make better 'Composition of Place' for meditation than a book. One could just see Our Lord preparing the coals for the fishes which the Apostles had caught, and I am sure that their barley loaves were nothing but chapaties."

CHRISTMAS EVE

(*From The Australian Advocate*)

Pine-crowned hills against the sky,
  Kneeling low to pray;
Friendly, lamp-lit villages
  Along the snowbound way;
Myriads of silver stars
  Gleaming softly bright—
Little King of Bethlehem,
  I see Thy star tonight!

The Christmas tree is first definitely mentioned in 1605 at Strasbourg. It was introduced into France and England as late as 1840 by Princess Helena, of Mecklenburg, and the Prince Consort, respectively.

If you have any old gold or silver which you do not want, we shall be very glad to receive it as we can use it for altar vessels.

THE ORIGIN OF THE WHITE SISTERS

IN 1867 one of the most terrible famines in the history of Africa ravaged Algeria. Thousands of Arabs and Kabyles died of hunger. In their despair, parents went so far as to eat their own children. So great was the fear of such a fate, that many a starving child fled from its home and wandered through the streets of Algiers.

Cardinal Lavigerie, then Archbishop of Algiers, seeing the misery to which these poor children were reduced, gathered together the little homeless ones and not only gave them food but also sheltered them in his own Episcopal Palace and grounds. He thus united about 2,000 children, and fearing they would starve to death, after disposing of his own wealth in their favor, he left for France to beg alms in their behalf. In spite of the care of the good Bishop, more than half of the number died; the privations they had already endured having weakened their constitutions.

CARDINAL LAVIGERIE

After the famine, the Venerable Prelate wished to send the children back to their homes but they refused to go, saying he was their Father and they would not leave him. The Cardinal was touched, and trusting that in time to be able to give the Bread of Life to their souls, he decided to keep the children, but to whom could he entrust them? The religious communities, then existing in Algiers, had all they could do to take care of their own works of mercy in behalf of Europeans.

It was then that the illustrious Cardinal conceived the idea of founding the Society of the White Fathers, whose members would devote their lives solely to the natives of Africa. He soon realized, however, that notwithstanding the zeal of the Missionary Fathers, their efforts could not produce satisfactory results because women alone may freely approach Arabian or Mohammedan women, who are strictly secluded under law of the Prophet. Therefore, the Venerable Prelate founded the Congregation of the Missionary Sisters of Our Lady of Africa, more commonly known as the White Sisters, to aid the White Fathers in instructing and Christianizing the women and through them the family; through the family, society.

The beginning, like those of all religious foundations, was very hard, but courage never failed the first Sisters. They struggled on amid hardships of all kinds, and when one day the Founder, seeing the Sisters lacking even the bare necessities of life without any means of helping them, wanted to abandon his project; Mother Salome, by her great zeal and spirit of sacrifice, inspired him with confidence for the future and so saved the existence of the Congregation.

The Sisters were given charge of the girls rescued from the famine. These, a little suspicious at first, studied the Sisters' attitude toward them, but when they compared the goodness and kindness of these strange women with the treatment they received in their own homes, they soon perceived something divine in the Sisters' religion, and it was not long before they asked to be instructed and baptized.

A few years later the children were old enough to marry, for the Arabian girls are married very young. The Catholic boys instructed by the Fathers chose their wives from among the girls entrusted to the Sisters' care. The first nine marriages took place the same day. After the ceremony the Cardinal, or their Father as the children called him, conducted the newlyweds to a village, which he had prepared in advance for them, and gave each couple a piece of land, a house, oxen and a plough in order to enable them to take care of themselves in the future.

In due time other boys and girls married and the Catholic colony increased. A church was built and the White Fathers and Sisters settled in the village.

Later on other villages were established and the Sisters opened different kinds of workrooms in Algeria and in the Atlas Mountains so as to come in contact with the poor native women and girls to teach them to earn their livelihood, and to win them, by their charity, into the Fold of Christ.

Wherever the missions were established a dis-

REV. MOTHER SALOME

pensary was also opened where the natives could come daily to have their wounds dressed and to be relieved of their sufferings. By their devotedness the Sisters soon won the hearts of these poor people, and in caring for their bodies were also enabled to do something for their souls. Babies, brought to the dispensaries in danger of death, received a passport for Heaven.

The White Fathers pushed their way through the jungles of Equatorial Africa and established their missions around the Great Lakes. When all danger was past they called the Sisters to complete their apostleship among the negro women and children.

After the death of their Founder, the Missionaries entered the Soudan and the Sisters followed in their footprints. The White Sisters devote themselves to every work of mercy and charity to the natives of Africa. Their principal works are: Catechism classes and the preparation of children for their First Communion, schools, workrooms, orphanages, asylums for the aged, hospitals, dispensaries, leper asylums, the care of the sick at domicile, visits of charity to the natives, and the formation of Native Sisters.

In such a variety of work each member of the Congregation may find an outlet for her zeal, and she may declare, in echo to her Founder: "I have loved everything in Africa!"—*The Messenger of Our Lady of Africa.*

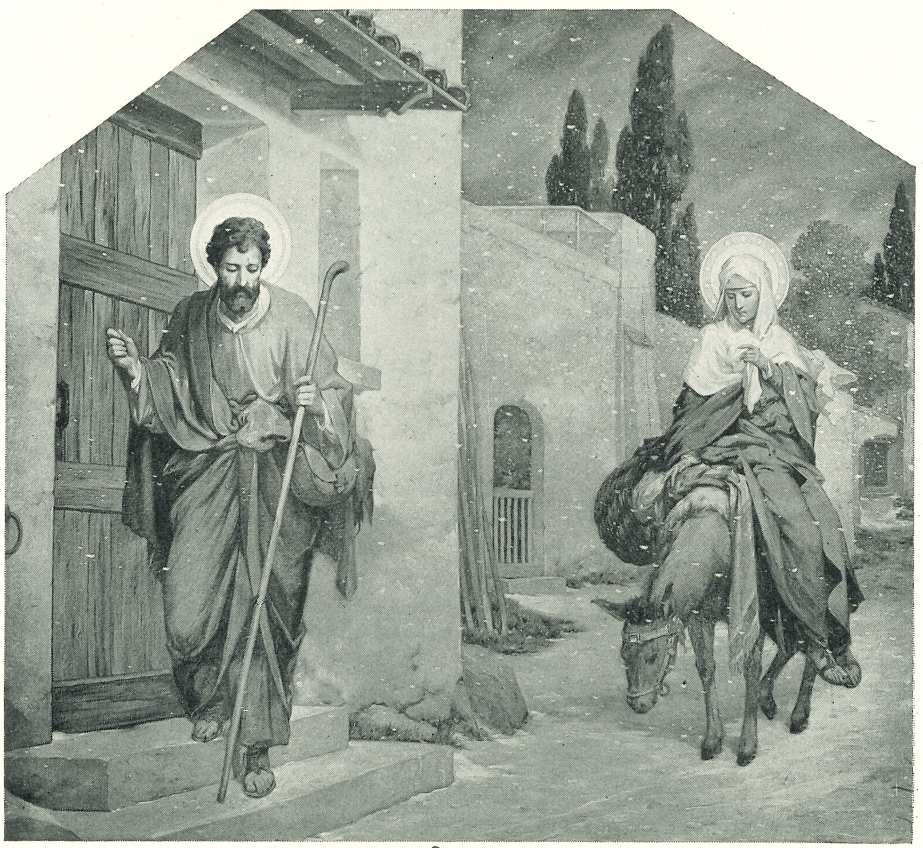
BETHLEHEM

(Continued from page 3)

tapestry and pictures—suitable furnishings for the birthplace of the King of Kings—yet the place no longer resembles that cave where He, who had so often no place whereon to lay His head, was born.

Also, the cave is now within the city of Bethlehem; probably centuries ago it lay outside the city walls. And, to this day, outside the city boundaries to the north, there are in the hillsides, many, many crude caves formed naturally in the rocky, barren earth: caves large enough to hold a small herd of cattle, caves small enough to please a jackal, caves used by man to shelter animals, caves neglected, barren playgrounds for a race of children who may be too serious to play in them. Here, near this cave where Christ was born, the angels sang "Glory to God in the highest; and on earth peace to men of good will." Luke 2:14.

In all Palestine, unless perhaps Jerusalem be a few feet higher, no city was nearer to heaven: an appropriate place to be born, conveniently close to angels and men! And, even today, on the plains of Bethlehem among the olive trees, the grass and the stones, shepherds, clad in the picturesque robes, flowing headgear, and leather sandals worn for centuries by the peasants of Palestine, watch over their flocks.



FRESCO IN ST. JOSEPH'S CHURCH, WASHINGTON, D. C. THERE WAS NO ROOM FOR THEM IN THE INN

SHORASWATI, THE GODDESS OF LEARNING

By A Medical Missionary

"Sister, Sister!"

"Yes; what is it?"

"Thursday is our Puja day, please come," enthusiastically urged a little medical student, handing her a bright pink invitation card, decorated with a bright blue goddess.

Five minutes later, in the next ward, the same thing happened, but this time with the unwelcome suggestion that the nurses be permitted to go. And so on all day until we had quite a collection of pink and blue and mauve and yellow and white invitations to attend the "Puja." About the same number also appeared in the nurses' letter box.

At last Sister decided to ask what it was all about and at what time it would take place. She was told to come "just at candlelight" and that there would be no Puja going on at that time, but all the Medical hostels would be decorated, etc. After some hesitation, Sister decided to go in order to take the nurses, as it was difficult to refuse them permission, yet it is not the thing in India to allow them to go out unaccompanied.

SHORASWATI

Shoraswati is the goddess of learning—the pen and ink goddess, as some one irreverently called her, as on this day no books, pens, pencils, or erasers are used, and the schools have a holiday.

We started out at about 5 in the afternoon and made rapid rounds of all the hostels to the great delight of the students who had sent us invitations. Some of the places were very nicely decorated, and there were several tableaux fixed up with the help of earthen, painted figures. One story represented a typical Hindu incident:

The first group depicted a lovely young girl who must now be married off. If the father delayed any longer he would be made an outcast, and no one would eat rice with him. Poor man, he had no money, so he could not make a marriage bandobast! What to do? He went to a Hindu priest and asked him to give him more time to marry off his daughter; but it was no use. The priest appeared to be scolding him, while at the back of the house the daughter was listening and wondering how she could save her father from disgrace. The next tableau showed the dead body of the girl, with her mother weeping bitterly by her side. She had heroically drowned herself to save her father's reputation.

As this little story was gotten up by Hindus, we are still in doubt as to whether it was to demonstrate an undesirable custom or to praise the heroic virtue of the Hindu maiden. Another tableau showed the descent of the rake:

A well-dressed man was shown drinking moth. (To this the Hindus are very much opposed.) Next, he was seen at the races. Finally, he was suffering from a very much exaggerated condition which was supposed to be cirrhosis of the liver—he was clad in rags, starving, and begging on the streets.

Everywhere there were piles of exercise books, medical books, erasers, pens, pencils, ink, rulers, etc., all piled on the floor before the shrine of Shoraswati. Can you imagine a large town functioning without anyone using a pen or pencil for a whole day? That is what happens here on this day! In one place the goddess was sitting on a tin lotus flower which opened and shut by electricity. Every five minutes it would shut with a tremendous clang. In another, there was an artificial fountain, which I rather suspected had been made by the simple process of unearthing the water pipe and puncturing a hole in it. The owner must have been pleased when he discovered it.

In the last tableau which we saw there was a boy who declared that there were no gods. His father told him that there were and explained to him all about them, but still the boy refused to believe. His father warned him that he would be punished if he continued in his unbelief, but the youth disregarded his words. Then the god came and killed him by opening up his abdomen and devouring his viscera. It was a most awful spectacle; the intestines were wound around the neck of the god, who was covered with blood, and he held in his hands some of the partially devoured abdominal organs.

Let us welcome the greatest gift mankind ever received, the Infant Jesus.